School Quality Review Report

Martin T. Krueger Middle School

Michigan City Area Schools

March 8th –9th, 2018

Review Team Members

Melissa Blossom	Assistant Director of School Improvement	Indiana Department of Education
Kelley Grate	School Improvement Specialist	Indiana Department of Education
Angel Hunt	Title I Grants Specialist	Indiana Department of Education
Delayna Eldridge	7th Grade Science Teacher	Blackford County Schools
Chris Schnepp	6th Grade Teacher	Indianapolis Public Schools
Adam Meyers	9th Grade Social Studies Teacher	Elkhart Community Schools

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I.   Background on the School Quality Review

Public Law 221 (PL 221) was passed in 1999 before the enactment of the federal *No Child Left behind Act* (NCLB). It serves as the state's accountability framework. Among other sanctions, the law authorizes the Indiana State Board of Education (SBOE) to assign an expert team to conduct a School Quality Review for schools placed in the lowest category or designation of school performance for two consecutive years.

> *(a) The board shall direct that the department conduct a quality review of a school that is subject to IC 20-31-9-3. (b) The board shall determine the scope of the review and appoint an expert team under IC 20-31-9-3. (Indiana State Board of Education; 511 IAC 6.2-8-2; filed Jan 28, 2011, 3:08 p.m.: 20110223-IR-511100502FRA)*

The school quality review (SQR) is a needs assessment meant to evaluate the academic program and operational conditions within an eligible school. The SQR will result in actionable feedback that will promote improvement, including the reallocation of resources or requests for technical assistance. The process is guided by a rubric aligned to the United States Department of Education's "Eight Turnaround Principles" (see Appendix B). The school quality review includes a pre-visit analysis and planning meeting, onsite comprehensive review, and may include targeted follow-up visits.

State law authorizes the SBOE to establish an expert team to conduct the School Quality Review known as the Technical Assistance Team (TAT). Membership must include representatives from the community or region the school serves; and, may consist of school superintendents, members of governing bodies, teachers from high performing school corporations, and special consultants or advisers.
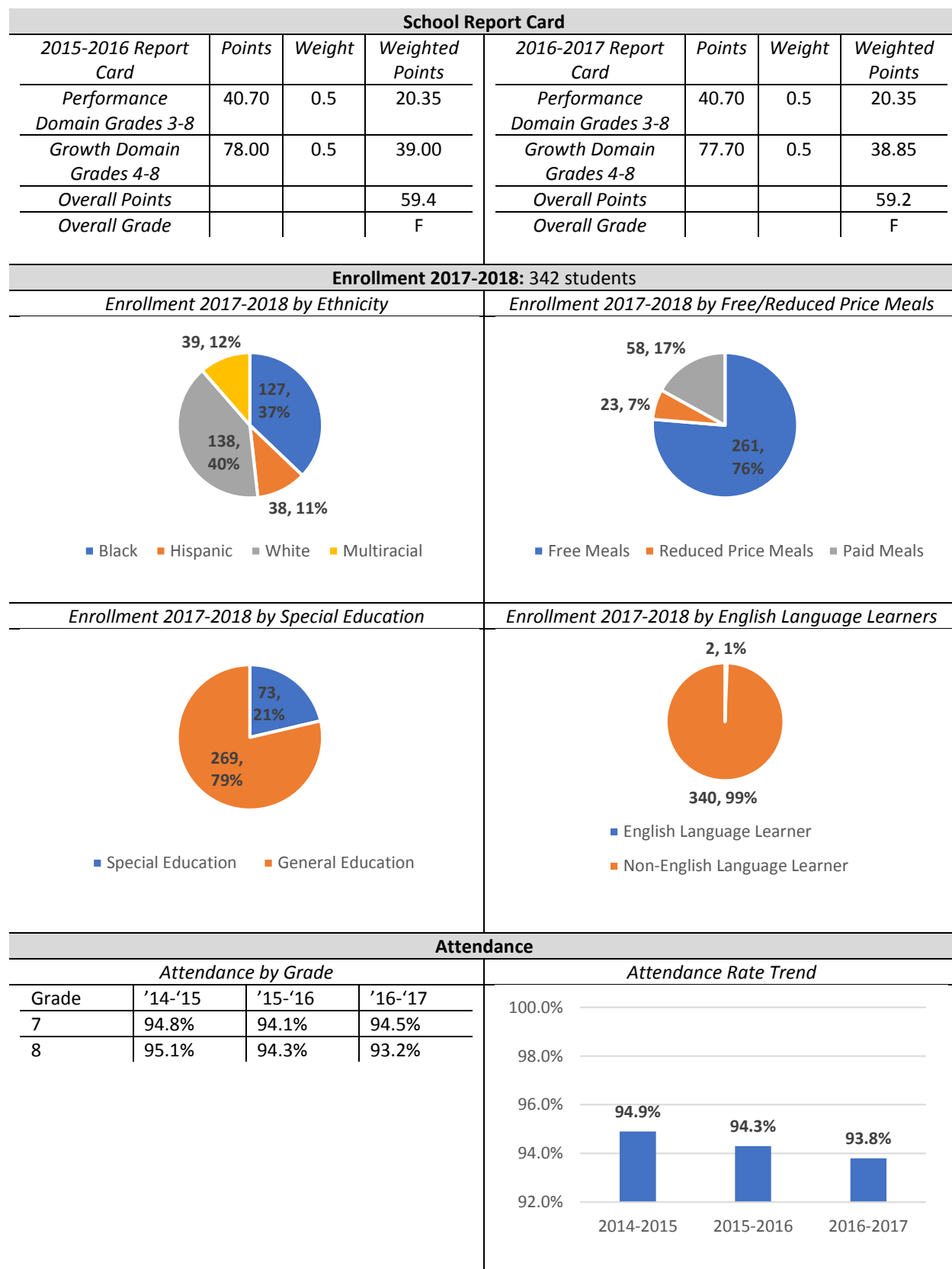
II.   Overview of the School Quality Review Process

The School Quality Review process is designed to identify Martin T. Krueger Middle School's strengths and areas for improvement organized around the United States Department of Education's Eight School Turnaround Principles. In particular, the School Quality Review process focused on two or three Turnaround Principles that were identified as priorities by the school and its district.

The on-site review consisted of the Technical Assistance Team (TAT) visiting the school for two days. During the two days, the TAT (1) conducted separate focus groups with students, teachers, and parents, (2) observed instruction in 30 classrooms, and (3) interviewed school and district leaders.

Prior to the visit, teachers completed an online survey, with 25 of 25 teachers participating. Parents were also invited to complete a survey with 1 being completed. Finally, the school leadership team completed a self-evaluation. Both surveys and the self-evaluation are made up of questions that align to school improvement principles and indicators (Appendix B).
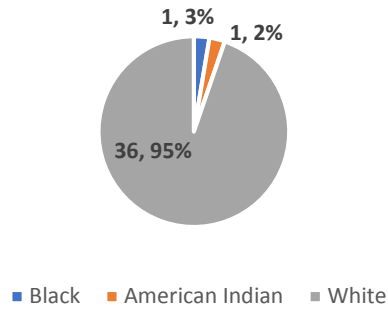
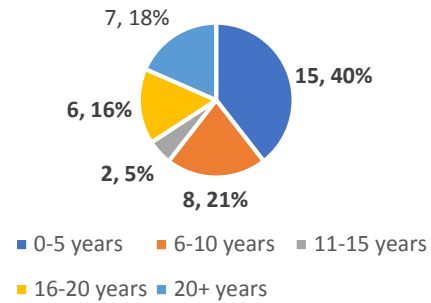# III.   Data Snapshot for Martin T. Krueger Middle School

School Report Card							
2015-2016 Report Card	*Points*	*Weight*	*Weighted Points*	*2016-2017 Report Card*	*Points*	*Weight*	*Weighted Points*
Performance Domain Grades 3-8	40.70	0.5	20.35	*Performance Domain Grades 3-8*	40.70	0.5	20.35
Growth Domain Grades 4-8	78.00	0.5	39.00	*Growth Domain Grades 4-8*	77.70	0.5	38.85
Overall Points			59.4	*Overall Points*			59.2
Overall Grade			F	*Overall Grade*			F

Enrollment 2017-2018: 342 students	
Enrollment 2017-2018 by Ethnicity	*Enrollment 2017-2018 by Free/Reduced Price Meals*

Enrollment 2017-2018 by Ethnicity

39, 12%
127, 37%
138, 40%
38, 11%

- Black ■ Hispanic ■ White ■ Multiracial

Enrollment 2017-2018 by Free/Reduced Price Meals

58, 17%
23, 7%
261, 76%

- Free Meals ■ Reduced Price Meals ■ Paid Meals

Enrollment 2017-2018 by Special Education	*Enrollment 2017-2018 by English Language Learners*

Enrollment 2017-2018 by Special Education

73, 21%
269, 79%

- Special Education ■ General Education

Enrollment 2017-2018 by English Language Learners

2, 1%
340, 99%

- English Language Learner
- Non-English Language Learner

Attendance	
Attendance by Grade	*Attendance Rate Trend*

Grade	'14-'15	'15-'16	'16-'17
7	94.8%	94.1%	94.5%
8	95.1%	94.3%	93.2%

Attendance Rate Trend

94.9% (2014-2015)
94.3% (2015-2016)
93.8% (2016-2017)

School Personnel
Teacher Count 2015-2016: 38

Teacher Count 2015-2016 by Ethnicity	*Teacher Count 2015-2016 by Years of Experience*

Teacher Count 2015-2016 by Ethnicity

1, 3%   1, 2%

36, 95%

■ Black ■ American Indian ■ White

Teacher Count 2015-2016 by Years of Experience

7, 18%   15, 40%

6, 16%

2, 5%

8, 21%

■ 0-5 years ■ 6-10 years ■ 11-15 years
■ 16-20 years ■ 20+ years

Student Academic Performance

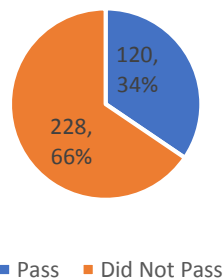| *ISTEP+ 2016-2017* *Both English/Language Arts and Math*	*ISTEP+ Percent Passing Trend* *Both English/Language Arts and Math*
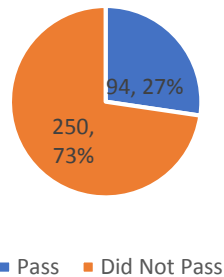
ISTEP+ 2016-2017 Both English/Language Arts and Math

94, 27%

250, 73%

■ Pass ■ Did Not Pass

ISTEP+ Percent Passing Trend Both English/Language Arts and Math

	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
School	27.5%	25.1%	27.3%

■ Statewide ■ Corporation ■ School
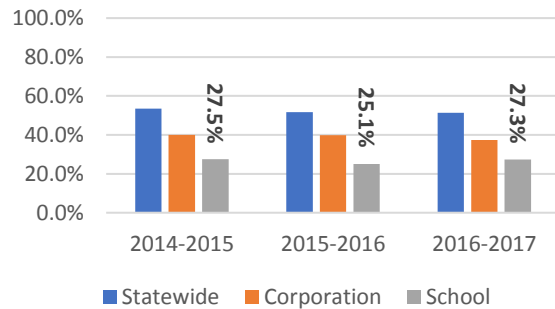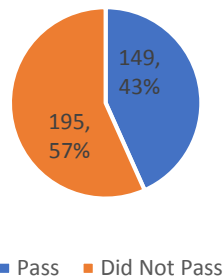
ISTEP+ 2016-2017: English/Language Arts	*ISTEP+ Percent Passing Trend: English/Language Arts*

ISTEP+ 2016-2017: English/Language Arts

149, 43%

195, 57%

■ Pass ■ Did Not Pass

ISTEP+ Percent Passing Trend: English/Language Arts

	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
School	45.0%	47.0%	43.3%

■ Statewide ■ Corporation ■ School
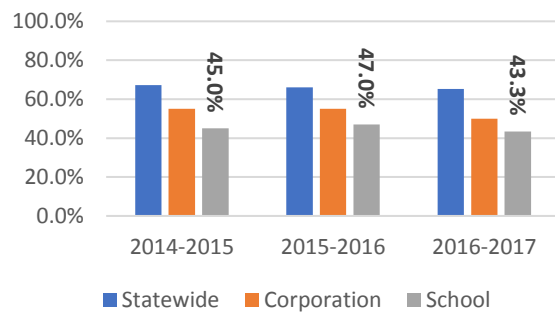
ISTEP+ 2016-2017: Math	*ISTEP+ Percent Passing Trend:Math*

ISTEP+ 2016-2017: Math

120, 34%

228, 66%

■ Pass ■ Did Not Pass

ISTEP+ Percent Passing Trend:Math

	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
School	32.1%	31.0%	34.5%

■ Statewide ■ Corporation ■ School
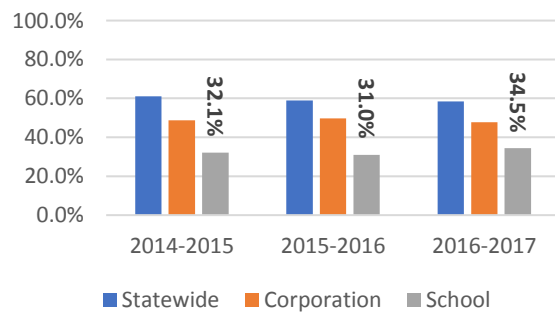
IV.   Evidence and Rating for School Turnaround Principle #3: Effective Instruction

Background

The next two sections of the report illustrate the Technical Assistance Team's key findings, supporting evidence, and overall rating for each of the school's prioritized Turnaround Principles.

To thoughtfully identify these prioritized Turnaround Principles, school and district leaders used a "Turnaround Principle Alignment Tool" provided by the Indiana State Board of Education to determine the two to three Turnaround Principles that most closely align with the goals and strategies outlined in the school's improvement plan.

This report focuses on these prioritized Turnaround Principles to provide a strategically targeted set of findings and recommendations. Additional evidence on the other six Turnaround Principles can be found in Appendix A of this report.

School Turnaround Principle 3: Effective Instruction			
Evidence Sources			
Classroom Observations, Observations of Hallway Transitions and Common Areas, Teacher Focus Group, Student Focus Group, Parent Focus Group, Principal Interviews, Teacher Surveys, Artifacts Provided by Krueger Middle School			
Rating			
1 Ineffective *No evidence of this happening in the school*	2 Improvement Necessary *Limited evidence of this happening in the school*	3 Effective *Routine and consistent*	4 Highly Effective *Exceeds standard and drives student achievement*
Evidence			
Strengths			Aligned Turnaround Principle Indicator(s)
• The school calendar and daily schedule include protected professional development time in which all teachers regularly attend.			• 1.8, 1.9, 2.2, 3.5, 5.3, 7.3
• Through stakeholder focus groups, the building leader and teachers express a need to hold high expectations for students both academically and behaviorally as evidenced through a growth mindset mentality.			• 1.4, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3.6
• The instructional coach works with some teachers on a voluntary basis only providing meaningful feedback to promote continuous improvement.			• 2.2, 2.3, 3.5, 3.6 4.2, 4.4, 5.2, 5.3

Areas for Improvement	Aligned Turnaround Principle Indicator(s)
• Few SMART objectives are posted and align to standards-based instruction. In only 46% of classroom observations were objectives aligned to Indiana Academic Standards.	• 3.1, 3.3, 3.5
• Few classrooms implement a variation of instructional strategies; the majority of observations indicates whole group instruction as the primary instructional strategy.	• 1.4, 1.5, 2.2, 3.2, 3.4
• There is little evidence that teachers use student learning data to inform their selection of instructional and response strategies; in only 30% of classrooms observed did the teacher consistently check for student understanding and adjust the lesson as needed.	• 3.3

V. Evidence and Rating for School Turnaround Principle #4: Curriculum, Assessment, and Intervention Systems

School Turnaround Principle 4: Curriculum, Assessment, and Intervention Systems			
Evidence Sources			
Classroom Observations, Observations of Hallway Transitions and Common Areas, Teacher Focus Group, Student Focus Group, Parent Focus Group, Principal Interviews, Teacher Surveys, Artifacts Provided by Krueger Middle School			
Rating			
1	2	3	4
Ineffective	Improvement Necessary	Effective	Highly Effective
No evidence of this happening in the school	*Limited evidence of this happening in the school*	*Routine and consistent*	*Exceeds standard and drives student achievement*
Evidence			
Strengths			Aligned Turnaround Principle Indicator(s)
• Math and English/Language Arts (ELA) teachers have access to iReady (diagnostic tool) and Ready (curriculum) resources which align to the standards-based curriculum and provide formative and summative feedback.			• 4.1, 4.3, 4.4
• There is designated time for intervention built into the master schedule daily.			• 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 7.1
• The principal, instructional coach, and teachers have access to district wide curriculum guides.			• 4.1, 4.4

Areas for Improvement	Aligned Turnaround Principle Indicator(s)
• According to the instructional leadership focus group and the district office interview, iReady provides valuable interim data; however, not all classrooms utilize the data in order to plan for targeted instruction.	• 1.5, 1.6, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 5.2, 5.4, 6.2, 6.3
• All students are assigned to a Success period; however, based on classroom observations, the structure of the intervention lacks direct instruction in order to complement iReady learning paths.	• 4.5, 7.1, 7.2
• Lessons, both in terms of objective and instruction observed, were infrequently aligned to grade-level Indiana Standards.	• 1.6, 2.2, 3.1, 3.5, 4.2, 4.4

VI.   Recommendations

Background

This section outlines an intentionally targeted set of recommendations that align to one or more of the school's prioritized Turnaround Principles. Anchored in the United States Department of Education's Turnaround Principles framework, these recommendations are representative of what the Technical Assistance Team believes to be the most immediate changes needed to accelerate growth in academic and non-academic student outcomes at Krueger Middle School. These recommendations should not be thought of as an exhaustive set of school improvement strategies, but rather as a part of the ongoing and continuous school improvement process.

Recommendation 1
Design a long-range plan for professional development that prioritizes the use of multiple, evidence-based instructional strategies that will engage all students, utilizing the resources available from district academic initiatives. Monitor the implementation and impact of this professional development, while providing all teachers with on-going feedback during initial implementation, active application, and sustained use of prioritized instructional strategies in order to measure the impact on student achievement.
Aligned Turnaround Principle(s)
1.4, 1.5, 2.2, 3.2, 3.4
Rationale
Multiple instructional strategies provide teachers with a variety of tools to actively engage all students in a more meaningful way. The use of multiple instructional strategies help teachers create learning environments in which all student needs are equitably addressed. Once such strategy involves student engagement. Crafting a classroom of high engagement requires intentional design. Specific examples of engagement strategies, by Robert Marzano, include effective pacing, demonstrating intensity and enthusiasm, building positive teacher-student and peer relationships, and using effective verbal feedback.

Classroom observations revealed that multiple instructional strategies were utilized in less than half of all classrooms. The primary instructional strategy used was whole group. Students were compliant and well-behaved but not actively engaged in the learning process.

In regards to professional development, the teacher focus group revealed an exposure to a variety of professional development topics throughout the year, including teaming, cultural competency, block scheduling, literacy and iReady/Ready. Some teachers expressed frustration with having several resources but lack the understanding of how to apply the information to daily teaching practices in order to impact student achievement. In other words, teachers indicate that multiple trainings are offered in order to implement district initiatives; however, the training does not include modeling and opportunities to practice to support sustained implementation.

Most notably, teachers shared in the focus group that they find immense value in working one-on-one with the instructional coach focused on content-specific instructional strategies. This coaching model is ideal for professional learning, according to some teachers, because it creates a collaborative, non-evaluative environment.

Recommendation 2
Research and establish a system of academic intervention based on a triangulation of data in order to provide high leverage instruction to students who are not only in need of remediation, but enrichment as well, in order to promote growth and achievement for all students. Provide professional development to educators in order to effectively implement the system and monitor the fidelity of use.
Aligned Turnaround Principle(s)
4.5, 7.2
Rationale
In order for an intervention program to produce maximum results, current student assessment data must be used. By identifying individual students, as well as, his or her areas of need, teachers can plan and provide targeted intervention to improve student achievement.   It is necessary for teachers, highly qualified in specific content areas, to utilize evidenced-based instruction and not solely rely on the self-paced resources such as iReady. Based on observations of the intervention period, there was minimal evidence of student engagement in targeted interventions. Some students were observed working individually on iReady but receiving little guidance or direction from teachers. Other students worked on other class assignments or read. To maximize student learning during the intervention period, student groupings should be based on current formative assessment data which aligns to the Indiana Academic Standards for math and ELA, and move frequently according to identified student needs. Additionally, students who demonstrate the most significant academic needs are assigned to the teachers who consistently implement best practice instructional strategies with fidelity.

Ideally, long-term planning would begin soon to design a more systematic and targeted intervention program for the 2018-1019 school year. Given the urgency to improve student achievement, and the significant investment that has been made in the current intervention model, the school must immediately ensure that students with the greatest academic need are assigned to the teachers who have demonstrated the capacity and willingness to effectively provide targeted instruction.

Recommendation 3
Equip teachers with the skills and knowledge to develop learning goals that accurately assess student learning of Indiana Academic Standards. Provide on-going professional development on unpacking standards that will ultimately prepare teachers to more effectively create student learning objectives that align with the appropriate of rigor. Additionally, teachers are encouraged to consider implementing frequent checks for understanding that tie back to the learning objectives in order to gauge student learning and to determine the adjustments to instruction necessary to address students' learning gaps.
Aligned Turnaround Principle(s)
3.1, 3.3
Rationale
In over half of classrooms observed, student learning objectives were inconsistently communicated or assessed. In 68% of classrooms observed, minimal evidence of checks for understanding were observed; therefore, teachers were unable to modify or adjust instruction due to a lack of student feedback tied to learning goals. In some instances, learning objectives did not align to state standards. For example, in one particular observation, the learning objective states, "Find the circumference of a circle." However, the targeted standard explains, "Understand the formulas for area and circumference of a circle and use them to solve real-world and other mathematical problems; give an informal derivation of the relationship between circumference and area of a circle." This disconnect demonstrates a focus on basic content knowledge versus the skill development, which the Indiana Academic Standards are targeting. The first step in developing appropriate and effective learning goals is to unpack the standards. There are two types of learning goals that are implied in any standard. The first type of goal is a content goal. Content goals emphasize content knowledge. Their main focus is on what students need to know or understand. The second type of goal is a process goal. Process goals focus on students' learning or developing a skill. For example, knowing the meaning of irony is a content goal. Knowing how to explain how an author uses irony to strengthen her argument is a process goal.[1]

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[1] Smith, J. R., Jackson, R. R., & Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. (2009). *Never work harder than your students: The journey to great teaching*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

VII. Appendix A: Evidence for Remaining School Turnaround Principles

Background

We believe it is valuable for school and district leaders to have a summary of the TAT's findings and evidence for each of the eight Turnaround Principles. As such, this section of the report outlines key findings and supporting evidence for each of the Turnaround Principles that were not identified by school and district leaders as prioritized Turnaround Principles for this school.

This information is intentionally provided in an appendix to reinforce the importance of the previously stated findings, evidence, ratings, and recommendations for the school's prioritized Turnaround Principles.

School Turnaround Principle 1: Effective Leadership
Evidence Sources
• Classroom Observations, Observations of Hallway Transitions and Common Areas, Teacher Focus Group, Student Focus Group, Parent Focus Group, Principal Interviews, Teacher Surveys, Artifacts Provided by Krueger Middle School
Evidence Summary

Strengths
    • Feedback from teacher and parent focus groups indicate the principal is visible, accessible, and consistent with student discipline.
    • On the teacher survey, over 80% of teachers agreed that high expectations for student behavior are evident.
    • Evidence collected throughout the review demonstrated a clear investment by district office in professional development time and resources. Examples include providing development through Curriculum Associates, Jack Berkemeyer, and a full-time curriculum coach.
 	
Areas for Improvement
    • On their survey, 18% of teachers agreed that the principal uses data to establish a coherent vision that is understood and supported by the entire school community.
    • On their survey, 8% of teachers agreed that the school's organizational culture encourages trust, respect and a sense of responsibility for student achievement.

School Turnaround Principle 2: Climate and Culture

Evidence Sources

- Classroom Observations, Observations of Hallway Transitions and Common Areas, Teacher Focus Group, Student Focus Group, Parent Focus Group, Principal Interviews, Teacher Surveys, Artifacts Provided by Krueger Middle School

Evidence Summary

Strengths
- 88% of classrooms observed were arranged to support collaborative learning with easily identifiable work areas.
- Feedback from the student focus group indicated that students have pride in their school and positive relationships with their teachers.
- Feedback from multiple stakeholder focus groups revealed high satisfaction with the change in school structures including increased visibility of the school leader, decreased student behavior problems, and school pride.

Areas for Improvement
- Feedback from multiple stakeholder focus groups indicated that the current scheduling model does not provide an equitable learning environment for all students.
- On their survey, only 8% of teachers agreed the school has effective measures for promoting good attendance, eliminating truancy and tardiness.
- In only 29% of classrooms observed was a rigorous Depth of Knowledge evident.

School Turnaround Principle 5: Effective Staffing Practices

Evidence Sources

- Teacher Focus Group, Parent Focus Group, Principal Interviews, District Leadership Interview, Teacher Surveys, Artifacts Provided by Krueger Middle School

Evidence Summary

Strengths
- Martin T. Krueger staff are provided a plethora of professional development opportunities, both within the school year and summer break, which includes individual, collaborative, and shared reflection.
- All brand new teachers and teachers new to the school corporation are mentored by highly skilled peers.

Areas for Improvement
- Teacher interviews indicated that newer teachers have not been effectively trained in the Teacher Effectiveness Rubric in order to clearly understand exactly how they are being evaluated.

- Teacher and principal interviews indicated that a follow-up process is not currently in place to monitor and support the effective implementation of professional development on a classroom-by-classroom basis.

School Turnaround Principle 6: Effective Use of Data

Evidence Sources

- Classroom Observations, Observations of Hallway Transitions and Common Areas, Teacher Focus Group, Student Focus Group, Parent Focus Group, Principal Interviews, Teacher Surveys, Artifacts Provided by Krueger Middle School

Evidence Summary

Strengths
- Interviews with multiple stakeholder groups confirmed that there are multiple data points (Ready Reading and Math, PSAT, ISTEP, common formative, summative and short-cycle assessments) being collected.
- The iReady reports are available and provide student mastery of grade level standards, diagnostic year end data, as well as, ISTEP predictability in both reading and math.

Areas for Improvement
- According to the teacher surveys and teacher focus groups, there are multiple pieces of academic data being collected, but it is not effectively being used to inform classroom instruction.
- Multiple stakeholder groups stated that the data being collected is not being utilized to inform intervention groupings either in individual classrooms or during school wide Success period time.
- Teacher surveys and focus groups indicate there is currently not a specific process for the analysis of formative assessment data in any content area.

School Turnaround Principle 7: Effective Use of Time

Evidence Sources

- Classroom Observations, Observations of Hallway Transitions and Common Areas, Teacher Focus Group, Student Focus Group, Parent Focus Group, Principal Interviews, Teacher Surveys, Artifacts Provided by Krueger Middle School

Evidence Summary

Strengths
- Observations revealed that instructional time is protected from frequent interruptions.

- The master schedule provides teachers with a personal and a team prep period every day.
- A 30-minute intervention period to support all students is built into the master schedule.

Areas for Improvement
- Based on observations and focus group interviews, the current intervention system is not structured to meet specific student needs and is primarily computer driven.
- According to the teacher survey, the current schedule lacks the flexibility to allow for accelerations or interventions for the core content areas.
- Teacher collaboration time is not aligned to the goals of the school improvement plan as discussed in teacher and principal interviews.

School Turnaround Principle 8: Effective Family and Community Engagement
Evidence Sources

- Classroom Observations, Observations of Hallway Transitions and Common Areas, Teacher Focus Group, Student Focus Group, Parent Focus Group, Principal Interviews, Teacher Surveys, Parent surveys, Artifacts Provided by Krueger Middle School

Evidence Summary

Strengths
- The principal interview indicated that report cards are picked up at the school by parents and quarterly conferencing is available.
- According to teacher, parent, and principal interviews, there is strong environmental community engagement with the school.

Areas for Improvement
- As evidenced through focus group interviews and only one parent survey being returned, there is low parent involvement.
- The parent focus group shared that the time of activities at the school prohibit most parents from attending due to work schedules.
- The parent focus group expressed a need to reduce the "them vs us" barrier at the school.